

IN THE CLAIMS:

Cancel claims 1-15 without prejudice and replace them with new claims 16-34 as follows:

Claims 1-15 (**CANCELLED**).

16. (NEW) A centrifuge for the purification of lubricating oil of an internal-combustion engine, including a housing with a removable cover, a housing-fixed shaft arranged in the housing and with a centrifuge rotor which is rotatably mounted on the shaft and is replaceable, whereby the shaft is hollow at least in its lower part and forms in its hollow inside a section of a lubricating oil supply canal, which canal is in flow connection with an inside of the centrifuge rotor mounted on the shaft over at least one orifice opening, comprising:

an adjustable valve plug arranged at the shaft and arranged to be held in an open position by the centrifuge rotor, the valve plug releasing the orifice opening in the open position, and

the valve plug arranged to be transferred into a closing position and held in the closing position by a force created by at least one of a pressure of the lubricating oil and by a preloading component if the centrifuge rotor is missing, the valve plug plugging the orifice opening in the closing position.

17. (NEW) A centrifuge according to claim 16, wherein a sleeve, which is adjustable in a longitudinal direction of the shaft, is arranged as a valve plug and the orifice opening is a lateral opening from the hollow inside of the shaft outward.

18. (NEW) A centrifuge according to claim 17, wherein said sleeve is arranged in the hollow inside of the shaft.

19. (NEW) A centrifuge according to claim 17, wherein said sleeve is arranged on an outer circumference of the shaft.

20. (NEW) A centrifuge according to claim 19, wherein a lower end piece of the shaft itself or a shaft pedestal supporting the shaft includes an increased outside diameter in relation to the remaining shaft and the sleeve fits to the increased outside diameter with a stepped interior with a larger diameter in its lower part and with a smaller diameter in its upper part.

21. (NEW) A centrifuge according to claim 20, wherein the shaft further includes a lateral opening from its hollow inside outward at a height of the larger inside diameter of the sleeve and the sleeve is sealed in its lower end area at its interior diameter against the outer circumference of the shaft or the shaft pedestal by means of a slide seal.

22. (NEW) A centrifuge according to claim 17, wherein between the sleeve and a pedestal part of the housing at least one pressure spring is arranged as the preloading component.

23. (NEW) A centrifuge according to claim 18, wherein the sleeve includes arms running radially from the inside outward, which are situated in longitudinal slots of the lower end area of the shaft and which guide the sleeve secured against torsion.

24. (NEW) A centrifuge according to claim 19, wherein the sleeve includes arms running radially from the outside inward, which are situated in longitudinal slots of the lower end area of the shaft and which guide the sleeve secured against torsion.

25. (NEW) A centrifuge according to claim 16, wherein a lower pivot bearing of the centrifuge rotor is designed as a rotor-fixed friction bearing.

26. (NEW) A centrifuge according to claim 16, wherein a lower pivot bearing of the centrifuge rotor is designed as a shaft-fixed friction bearing.

27. (NEW) A centrifuge according to claim 17, wherein a lower pivot bearing of the centrifuge rotor is designed as a shaft-fixed antifriction bearing.

28. (NEW) A centrifuge according to claim 27, wherein the antifriction bearing is arranged at the interior circumference of the sleeve and together the antifriction bearing and the sleeve are axially adjustable on the shaft.

29. (NEW) A centrifuge according claim 17, wherein a pedestal part of the housing supporting the shaft limits a shift path of the sleeve in its opening direction.

30. (NEW) A centrifuge according to claim 17, wherein the shaft includes a stop to limit a shift path of the sleeve in its closing direction.

31. (NEW) A centrifuge according to claim 16, wherein a valve is integrated into the shaft, which valve releases a supply of lubricating oil to the centrifuge rotor only when achieving a preset minimum lubricating oil pressure.

32. (NEW) A centrifuge according to claim 16, wherein with the centrifuge rotor inserted into the housing the valve plug is adjustable in the closing direction against a preloading force working in its opening direction by a force which is created by a lubricating oil pressure above a preset upper lubricating oil limiting pressure.

33. (NEW) A centrifuge according to claim 32, wherein at least one spring is provided between the bottom of the centrifuge rotor and the valve plug, the spring preloading the valve plug with a force directed in its opening direction and the valve plug is adjustable in the closing direction against the force of the spring which is created by a force of the upper lubricating oil limiting pressure.

34. (NEW) A centrifuge according to claim 33, wherein a guide sleeve, which is adjustable coaxially relative to the shaft, is arranged between the bottom of the centrifuge rotor and the spring, which is, if the centrifuge rotor is inserted, held in a lower final shift position by said centrifuge rotor and which assumes an upper final shift position, if the centrifuge rotor is not present, due to a lubricating oil pressure force or a spring force.